



MEDIA RELEASE

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New report highlights continued threat of Somali piracy

The ICC International Maritime Bureau (IMB) raises concern on the continued acts of maritime piracy off the coast of Somalia in its first quarter report for 2024, released today.

A total of thirty-three incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships were recorded in the first three months of 2024, an increase from 27 incidents for the same period in 2023.

Of the 33 incidents reported, 24 vessels were boarded, six had attempted attacks, two were hijacked and one was fired upon. Violence towards crew continues with 35 crew members taken hostage, nine kidnapped and one threatened.

Worrying rise in Somali pirate activity

The Q1 report highlights the continued threat of Somali piracy incidents with two reported hijackings. In addition, one vessel each was fired upon, boarded and reported an attempted approach. These incidents were attributed to Somali pirates who demonstrate mounting capabilities, targeting vessels at great distances, from the Somali coast.

A Bangladesh flagged bulk carrier was hijacked on 12 March and its 23 crew were taken hostage by over 20 Somali pirates. The vessel was underway approximately 550 nautical miles (nm) from Mogadishu while enroute from Mozambique to the United Arab Emirates.

The IMB is aware of several reported hijacked dhows and fishing vessels, which are ideal mother ships to launch attacks at distances from the Somali coastline.

ICC Secretary General John W.H. Denton said: "The resurgence of Somali pirate activity is worrying, and now more than ever it is crucial to protect trade, safeguard routes, and the safety of seafarers who keep commerce moving. All measures to ensure the uninterrupted free flow of goods throughout international supply chains must be taken."

IMB has commended the timely and positive actions from authorities ensuring the release and safety of the crew.

A 40-hour operation by the Indian navy in the Indian Ocean on 15 March 2024 culminated in the capture of 35 Somali pirates and the release of a previously highjacked vessel and its 17 crew.

A bulk carrier boarded by pirates on 4 January over 450 nm off the east coast of Somalia was rendered safe along with its 21 crew members by an Indian naval vessel.

In late January, the Seychelles coast guard intervened to safeguard a hijacked fishing vessel and its six crew. Three suspected Somali pirates were apprehended in this operation.

IMB Director Michael Howlett said: "We reiterate our ongoing concern on the Somali piracy incidents and urge vessel owners and Masters to follow all recommended guidelines in the latest version of the Best Management Practices (BMP 5). We also commend the actions of the Indian navy and Seychelles coast guard for intercepting hijacked vessels, safeguarding crews and capturing pirates."

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Caution urged in the Gulf of Guinea

Incidents within the Gulf of Guinea waters continue to be at a reduced level. Six incidents were reported in Q1 2024 compared to five in the same period of 2023. The IMB urges continued caution as nine crew were kidnapped from a product tanker on 1 January 2024 around 45nm south of Bioko Island, Equatorial Guinea.

“While we welcome the reduction of incidents, piracy and armed robbery in the Gulf of Guinea remains a threat. Continued and robust regional and international naval presence to respond to these incidents and to safeguard life at sea is crucial,” Mr Howlett said.

Rising risks in Bangladesh and Singapore Straits

There has been a noticeable increase in reported low-level opportunistic crimes in Bangladeshi waters in 2024 with seven reported incidents received – six from vessels at anchorage in Chattogram – compared to one report for the whole of 2023.

The Singapore Straits recorded five incidents against four large bulk carriers and a general cargo vessel, considered low-level opportunistic incidents. But the threat for crew safety remains high as five crew were taken hostage in three separate incidents in January.

Request a copy of the Q1 2024 Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships report [here](#).

About IMB Piracy Reporting Centre

Since its founding in 1991, IMB’s Piracy Reporting Centre serves as a crucial, 24-hour point of contact to report crimes of piracy and lend support to ships under threat. Quick reactions and a focus on coordinating with response agencies, sending out warning broadcasts and email alerts to ships have all helped bolster security on the high seas. The data gathered by the Centre also provides key insights on the nature and state of modern piracy.

IMB encourages all shipmasters and owners to report all actual, attempted and suspected global piracy and armed robbery incidents to the Piracy Reporting Centre as a vital first step to ensuring adequate resources are allocated by authorities to tackle maritime piracy.

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About the International Chamber of Commerce

The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) is the institutional representative of more than 45 million companies in over 170 countries. ICC’s core mission is to make business work for everyone, every day, everywhere. Through a unique mix of advocacy, solutions and standard setting, we promote international trade, responsible business conduct and a global approach to regulation, in addition to providing market-leading dispute resolution services. Our members include many of the world’s leading companies, SMEs, business associations and local chambers of commerce.

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